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ABSTRACT

A detailed list of questions for writing one's autobiography as a college teacher are presented, and suggestions for synthesizing the fragments of one's working life with several devices for self-improvement are offered. The list of questions was derived from some general systems research models of career development and the learning relationship. The autobiographical vignettes can be helpful in revealing skills and career choices. Ninety-five questions and a checklist of elements and career stages are presented as guidelines and a stimulus for assessment for managers, counselors, and career decision-makers outside of academe. Career stages are identified as: early life, narrowing the range of choice, early job experience, first big job, commitment, turning points, other opportunities, mature productive years, and retirement. Attention is addressed to cultural, personal, or situational roles. Cultural roles include background sociophysical variables, individual culture, nature and culture of the occupation, culture of the corporation, socializer agenda, and outside influences. Personal roles include personality development, proximate personal determinants, and socializer strategies; situational roles include sociopsychological attributes, individual general situation, proximate social determinants, immediate situational determinants, and definition of the situation. Within these roles, the 95 considerations include interacting variables. Self-exploration efforts for the college teacher might include 12 ways of gathering materials, including: a daily teaching journal, student ratings of the teacher, and a faculty growth contract. (SW)

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SELF IMPROVEMENT QUESTIONS

FOR COLLEGE TEACHERS

by

Carl Slawski

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Abstract

A detailed list of questions for writing one's autobiography as a college teacher were derived from some general systems research models of career development and the learning relationship. Suggestions are then made for synthesizing the fragments of one's working life with several devices for self improvement.

SELF IMPROVEMENT QUESTIONS FOR COLLEGE TEACHERS

by Carl Slawski

Most of the faculty development literature deals with techniques of teaching per se. A high percentage deals with evaluation of teachers by students. Much less deals with evaluation by our peers on the faculty except in the threatening context of promotion or tenure decisions. Most of the time, it is assumed that teachers already have a clear idea of what they need in the way of improving their teaching methods or approach. And this is a dubious assumption. The question that naturally arises here is: How does a teacher go about finding out what he/she needs for self improvement? Is it simply a matter of continually exposing oneself to, and mastering new techniques as the occasion arises in faculty development seminars or teaching workshops? Since books on teaching are usually only read by administrators and by faculty in schools of education, there are some missing links in our approach to improving teaching. Obviously, feedback from students and constructive colleagues is an essential part of the process, but that information will not quickly lead to improvement unless we as individual teachers accept it, digest it, and find a place for it in our own career and philosophy of teaching. Most teachers have an implicit philosophy, but I have seen hardly any explicit, detailed, well thought out philosophies of education by teachers I have known. There are many well known authors however who express their views clearly, from the classical figures (like Plato, Aristotle, Ignatius of Loyola, Thomas Aquinas, John Henry Newman, and John Dewey), to the 1960's radicals (like

Paul Goodman, Carl Rogers, George Leonard, Paulo Friere, Ivan Illich, Jerry Farber, Postman and Weingartner), to the teaching technologists and observers more respected in the 1970's (like Kenneth Eble, Wilbert McKeachie, and numerous specialists known mainly in their own specialty). Yet I have observed only one teacher besides myself giving out to classes a statement of his/her own teaching philosophy or long range approach (and that in the person of Barry Singer, 1971). At the same time, how few of us college teachers have ever received any formal instruction in how to teach before we ever appeared in the classroom one day as teaching assistants leading a discussion group for an introductory course. As a result of such a history and tradition of ignoring these basics, I am sure there are very few among us who indeed have a systematic plan for self development, or even a comprehensive, descriptive statement of their successes and failures as a teacher, their development and refinement of styles and approaches over the years to different courses and different kinds of students within those courses, or to different kinds of student backgrounds, styles of learning and readiness to learn, to different atmospheres across student bodies or departments within our schools on our present home campus. I will hazard a guess that most of us do our self assessment only when the promotion requirements dictate it. This leads me to my suggested solution.

What I will try to do in this paper is to provide some basic tools and the elements of a program for self exploration and development that will help to bring us as individuals face to face with the existential reality, however glorious or absurd, of our life in and around students in courses or seminars that we teach or

facilitate. In this paper I am not so much interested in the research on teaching or teacher evaluation or on faculty development per se. Some excellent sources for that are Goldsmid and Wilson's new book (1981) called Passing on Sociology, or The Second Handbook of Research on Teaching (Travers: 1973), Centra's Determining Faculty Effectiveness (1979), and Richard I. Miller's Evaluating Faculty Performance (1972). I have presented the results of my research and prior thinking on related topics elsewhere. (See Slawski: 1972, 1973, 1976, 1979, 1980a, 1980b, 1981a). It is time now for a more personal approach.

I present the ideas in this paper from the point of view of a person who has tried them and survived with a certain amount of style. I claim no greatness, except perhaps as a resource person for my students. And I do claim with malice aforethought to be doing the best job I am capable of doing in order to help promote deeper learning in the students who stick it out in my classes. I offer this outline of a self-development program with the wish to help those of you who wish to help themselves. Budgets and time pressures of colleagues being what they are, this may be your only hope. But take hope. As Aristotle said, self knowledge is the key to a fuller life, so knowledge of oneself in one's teaching or faculty career cannot but help us find ourselves and be in turn more effective in the noble but often tarnished profession in which we labor. Recall too the words of Socrates: To know what you don't know is the beginning of wisdom. To come to the point of my effort in this paper, I offer you the outlines of a technology in search of philosophical, personal and humanistic, as well as interpersonal depth. I hope you personally will try a part of my plan, and that it eventually allows

you to synthesize your values, goals, relationships, sentiments, behaviors, skills and practices into a more coherent and well grounded whole in an evolving elaboration of your own greatness as a teacher or of your cogency and inspirational qualities as a facilitator of learning.

I am not aware of any ideological biases in this approach of self synthesis other than the one that says that self knowledge constructively sought is the key to self improvement. You who try this exercise may need a whole weekend as a retreat to do the first draft. Or you could set aside a couple hours each week until you have the basics completed, then expand and review and revise as the spirit moves you.

Since this is a paper on a basically autobiographical approach, I will assume poetic license and use the first person, so that I may convey my message more intimately and I hope more effectively. I will give mostly personal examples and feelings since I do not know others who have taken this approach. It is my own creation, though with borrowings from many sources, academic, journalistic and pedagogical. In part, I am trying to do for teachers what others have done for people in general, such as Patricia Case has done in How to Write Your Autobiography(1977), or Lois Daniel has done in How to Write Your Own Life Story (1980), or George Simons has done in Keeping Your Personal Journal (1978). In a programmatic way, Kotter et al have in a similar vein set up exercises for Self Assessment and Career Development (1978). In some ways, this present approach and program will be a values clarification exercise (in the manner of Simon et al, 1972), but one in search of the deepest meanings in our working life. Let me make one last caution before beginning

the task itself. Some of the self assessment questions deal with a possible career change, an event which could broaden one's background of experience that could be brought in turn into the classroom. But at very least, consideration of career change is a necessary step in the process of self affirmation in or out of one's present occupation, career or present job.

In order to help demonstrate to yourself some of the practical value of a general systems approach, as well as to gain some new insights into your relationships with colleagues and students in the context of your department and institution, I suggest that you give at least two examples for each question in this first group, one positive experience and one negative experience. (The numbering system used here corresponds to the order of the research hypotheses in the author's general systems paper entitled "Developing the Learning Relationship: A Systems Model,"(1980a). The hypotheses and phraseology are rearranged to suit the logic of self analysis.

On The Learning Relationship

H1: How would you describe the campus atmosphere, mainly in terms of orientations of students or clusters of students?

A. Describe the quality and variety of resources provided by your college/university.

B. In general, how do these resources promote or inhibit the growth of students or types of students on campus?

H2: What are some of the major ways in which your campus resources and administrative organization promote or inhibit various kinds of relationships between colleagues?

H3: Wnat aspects of the background, personalities and social and economic situation of your typical students aid versus hinder

their readiness to learn, interest and study habits?

H4: What features of the readiness to learn of 1) your typical students, and 2) some of your problematic students, either promote or inhibit their initiative and eagerness to put out the effort to learn?

H5: In what typical ways does the degree and quality of the initiative of your students tend to limit your interaction with them as a teacher/facilitator?

H11: How do your typical methods as a facilitator aid or hinder the patterns of interaction and relationships that develop with your students?

H6: What patterns of means and goals of education usually occur between you and your students? And how do these patterns result in the particular style of relationship that occurs between you and your students?

H8: In what ways do some of your students take the initiative to learn certain things independently without a teacher?

A. What kinds of goals do they achieve through independent study?

H7: What kinds of goals do your students achieve through their contact with you as a teacher/facilitator?

A. How are these goals usually affected by the group atmosphere among most other students? In what ways do the others generally help or hinder achievement of these learning goals?

H12: How do your relationships with your students provide you with notable satisfactions and frustrations? Describe them.

H13: Describe some experience or critical incidents, satisfactions and frustrations which led you to alter your methods of teaching or facilitating.

H9: Describe some aspects or qualities of your relationships with your colleagues on the faculty, especially those qualities that affect your ability or desire to provide resources to your students.

H10: What kind of contribution (knowledge, skills or learning resources) are you able and willing to make for the benefit of your students?

A. How does or will this kind of contribution of yours lead you to use certain educational means on behalf of your students?

Crystal and Bolles (1972) and others suggest the use of autobiographical vignettes for casting light on our skills and career choices. In this vein the succeeding ninety five questions and the check list of elements and career stages provide guidelines and food for thought for managers, counselors and career choosers and changers, in or out of academic life.

In order to gain a more complete overview of the career of the client or employee, the counselor or manager or autobiographer ought to address the following groups of questions. It would be helpful to do this with one finger on the accounting scheme contained in the author's paper on Identity Bargaining (1981a). The meanings of many of the terms used here and some of the numbering system are contained in that paper. In order to simulate third party analysis for the autobiographer, questions will be couched as though asked by a counselor or manager to his/her client, or you could ask a colleague to do this for you.

Career Stages List

1. Which of the nine stages of career development is the client passing through now? 1) Early life, 2) narrowing the range of choice, 3) early job experience, 4) first big job, 5) commitment, 6) turning points, 7) other opportunities, 8) mature productive years, 9) retirement.

Systems List

2. Which of the three types of role, cultural, personal or situational, are most important or significant in the recent career of the employee or client?

3. Within each type/cluster, which aspect or sub-type of role is most salient? For example, within the Cultural Role box, which is more salient?: A. Background, B. Individual Culture, C. Nature and Culture of the Occupation Itself, D. Culture of the Employer Organization, E. Socializer Agenda, or F. Outside Influences? Within the Personal Role box, which is more salient?: H. Personality Development, I. Proximate Personal Determinants, J. Socializer Strategies as perceived by Socializee, or K. Immediate Personal Determinants? Within the Situational Role box, which is

more salient?: M. Sociopsychological Attributes, N. Proximate Social Determinants, O. Individual General Situation, P. Immediate Situational Determinants, Q. Definition of the Situation, R. Coordination Attempts?

4. With regard to this client, which of the factors or subtypes (A through R) are most in conflict with one another?

Elements List

I. Cultural Roles
A. The counselor should be aware of the BACKGROUND SOCIO-PHYSICAL variables for both their direct and indirect effects on the client. (The counselor or autobiographer should ideally write or tape record a couple of sentences or more about each of these items in the biographical write-up.)

B. Characterize your client's background and relationships on these items of INDIVIDUAL CULTURE in a general way. (See list.)

C-F: The counselor should ask questions and draw inferences about these items to add to the client's profile.
C. NATURE AND CULTURE OF THE OCCUPATION
D. CULTURE OF THE CORPORATION
E. SOCIALIZER AGENDA
F. OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

II. Personal Roles
H. Describe in general: Personality Development
I. Proximate Personal Determinants
J. Socializer Strategies
K. Immediate Personal Determinants

III. Situational Roles
M. Sociopsychological Attributes
N. Proximate Social Determinants
O. Individual General Situation
P. Immediate Situational Determinants
Q. Definition of the Situation
R. Coordination Attempts

An alternative use of the accounting scheme would be as a guide to writing one's own career autobiography. The above outline, as stated, is more useful for the manager or counselor, and presumes a good familiarity with the nature of the accounting schemes. The following kinds of questions, numbered 1 through 95, should be answered by the autobiographer either orally on tape, or in writing.

Cultural Roles

A. Background Socio-Physical Boundaries

1. Briefly describe the geographical location and characteristics of your
   1) present residence,
   2) your youthful home(s), and
   3) your ideal location.

2. Describe the social class factors and attitudes and key related cultural values of your parents (say when you were age 10, as well as at present) along with your own present social class standing and cultural values.

3. Describe significant changes in the economy that you see as likely to affect your career and present position.

B. Individual Culture

4. Your ethnic origin and its importance to you.
5. Your schooling places, their quality and your success.
6. Important things you own: house, car, other major or treasured things or items.
7. Your marital status, age, and sex of children, their health and educational success to date.
8. Your religion, your degree of participation and its importance to you.
9. Your father's occupation, or that of the head of your household as you were growing up.
10. Your peer group at present and in the significant past.
11. Your best friends at present and in the significant past.

C. Nature and Culture of the Profession, Occupation and/or Discipline Itself

12. Your current as well as your desired occupation or profession as a whole.
13. What methods and procedures and skills does one need to perform this job? (See Bolles'long charts in What Color is Your Parachute?)
14. How much freedom does one have in performing on the job?
15. Are there special codes of ethics or rules of the game to be followed?
16. How specific are the entrance requirements for the job?
17. How relevant is your present work and your ideal job to change and betterment in society? How important is this to you?
18. How much emphasis is there in your occupation on "getting the job done"?
19. How much emphasis is there on good quality social interaction?

D. Culture of the Corporation and Department

20. How high is the quality of your fellow workers/colleagues?
21. How high is the quality of the trainees/apprentices/novices/ newcomers to your present and your ideal occupation?
22. How much competition is there among the newcomers?
23. How hard is it to get a job?

E. Socializer Agenda

24. In the training program for both your present and future/ideal job, describe the <u>mix</u> of various aspects of the job, or the

proportion of time spent in employing different types of skills. For example, a professor might spend 50% of his time teaching, 25% on research, 15% on administration, and 10% on public service.

25. Describe the organization of the company you work for. First, is it a tall bureaucracy? Or is it easy to talk to the top person in charge?
26. What are the most significant policies of the company or organization that affect you?
27. Are there any stated or unstated ideologies or traditions that affect you? If so, what are they and how do they affect you and your success or failure on the job?
28. Do any of your superiors or administrators affect you and your performance in notably favorable or unfavorable ways? If so: How so?

F. Outside Influences

29. Are there any other change agents, visiting evaluators or higher administrators who notably affect you and your work? If so: Who are they? What is their position? And how do they affect you in favorable or unfavorable ways?

II. Personal Roles

H. Personality Development

30. What is the status of your health as it affects or may affect your job?
31. Aside from formal schooling, how do you feel about learning, reading on your own, improving your knowledge?
32. How did your parents' discipline and treatment of you affect you in your choice of job and performance on the job?
33. What financial resources do you have at your disposal? How might this affect your job choice or performance?
34. How does either side of your family or how do any of your relatives affect your job skills or performance?

I. Proximate Personal Determinants

35. How much information do you have about the jobs you have in mind and the job market in general for your fields of interest?
36. How seriously do you intend to seek out more occupational information? What steps will you take?
37. What are the technical qualifications of the job you would like?
38. How well do your competencies match the technical qualifications needed for the job?
39. What are some of the characteristics of the social roles you will be expected to play?
40. How well do you think you will be able to play or fit into these roles?
41. List and place in order of priority the ten or more most important values in your life. (See Program Development Work Sheet with ladder of Cash.)
42. How important to you are the five success wishes? 1) the wish for independence, 2) the wish to demonstrate ability to work hard, 3) the wish to determine ability to get along with people, 4) the wish to have and manage money, and 5) the wish to make a good job record? (Miller & Form: 548). Rank order the importance of the five, from 1 to 5.

43. How strongly do you agree or disagree with:
   A) The four values of puritanism? Scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree. They are: 1) It is man's duty to know how to work and how to work hard. 2) Success in work is evidence of God's favor. 3) The measure of success is money and property. 4) The way to success is through industry and thrift.
   B) On the same scale, rate the four initial wants of the average worker: 1) security, 2) chance to advance, 3) to be treated like a human being, 4) to feel important (during the trial work period). (E. Roper in Miller and Form: 554).
44. What are your main job-related satisfactions?
45. What are some of the most important attitudes you have toward your present or propsed work? Say something about your beliefs, sentiments, behavior and strategies on the job.
46. List the main role models or admired persons in your occupational life, from your first job to the present.
   A) How have they influenced you in positive as well as negative ways?
47. How empathetic are you or have you been toward your role models and co-workers?
   A) Has this helped you to succeed or at least to get along with them?
48. What have been your six or so main frustrations on the job or in the work world?
49. How much and what kind of investments do you have in your present and future career?
50. How difficult would it be for you to change jobs? (On a 7-point scale from extremely difficult to extremely easy.) How difficult would it be for you to change careers?
51. How much and what kind of important things do you share with your co-workers?
52. How interested are you in the range of current issues and problems in your present and proposed fields of work?
53. What do people say or think when you first tell them your line of work?
54. What are the dominant images, symbols or fantasies which you have about your proposed or future line of work?
55. How committed are you to your occupation?
56. How committed are you to the tasks or skills used in your work?
57. How committed are you to the profession or to the individuals and organization of people in your field?
58. Do you take pride in the skills you have in your occupation?

J. Socializer Strategies as perceived by Socializee

59. What do you think of the strategies and methods used by the people who are giving you job training, and of those who did so in the past?

K. Immediate Personal Determinants

60. List and rank order your more immediate expectations for your present job and future one.
61. What kinds of happenings or events or changes will characterize your current and near future in your job and occupation?
62. How important is it for you to call yourself a member of your

occupation?
A) Is it an essential part of your self identity?
63. Has your occupational experience helped you to gain self esteem or self actualization?
A) Has it helped you to understand or associate with groups of people with whom you can identify?
B) Has it increased or decreased your needs for self esteem or self actualization?
64. What sort of image do you try to project for your profession or occupation?
65. How would you typify the plans and expectations of students, beginners or apprentices in your occupation?

III. Situational Roles

M. Sociopsychological Attributes

66. What is the general level of knowledge required in your present and future occupation? How do you match up?
67. What is the general level of education and ability required in your present and future occupations? How do you match up?
68. What is the social position or rank of members of your occupation? How does this affect you and those around you?
69. How important to you is your occupational life?
A) Do you identify strongly with certain members of your occupation?
B) Do you aspire to certain higher levels of advancement in your occupation?

N. Proximate Social Determinants

70. How much demand is there for workers in your present and hoped for occupation?
71. What job skills are essential to the performance of your present job?
72. What are some of the requirements for success that are not absolutely essential to the performance of the job?
73. What are the major types of reward a person receives in your job?

O. Individual General Situation

71. What kind of a neighborhood did you grow up in?
A) What kind do you live in now?
75. Did you and do you now identify with the values of certain groups of people in your area or neighborhood? If so: How so? What do you value most and least in relation to their values?
76. What careers or sequences of careers have some of your friends and acquaintances had?
A) What insights have you or can you glean from their experiences at work?
77. At which of the eight developmental stages do you fall at present? Erikson (1960) notes eight ages and the corresponding virtue to be developed, as follows: 1. Infancy: trust. 2. Early Childhood: autonomy. 3. Play age: Initiative. 4. School age: Industry. 5. Adolescence: Identity. 6. Young Adult: Intimacy. 7. Adult: Generativity. 8. Mature Age: Integrity.
78. Where is your place on the advancement tree among the:
A) Five periods: Preparatory, Initial, Trial, Stable, Retirement. (Miller & Form: 541).

B) Ten links in the occupational chain: 1. The first job. 2. "Regular" occupation, reaching level of the father. 3. The range of income. 4. Scale of living for self and family. 5. Place of residence and type of living permitted or encouraged by the occupation and income. 6. Consequent status or prestige. 7. Degree of social and political influence. 8. Reflex of status in family attitude and conduct. 9. Degree of health and personal and cultural attainments. 10. As the cycle is renewed in the oncoming generation, the incentives, schooling, occupational training, and personal equipment of the children for competition in the industrial world and for the consumption of goods and services (Miller and Form: 594-5).

C) Nine Stabilizing Forces: 1. Realization or rationalization of the trial period goal. 2. Seniority. 3. Age. 4. Income. 5. Marriage and family. 6. Home ownership. 7. Friendship ties. 8. Institutional ties. 9. Identification with work plant and community (Miller and Form: 596-601).

D) Five Disrupting Forces: 1. Cyclical and seasonal unemployment. 2. Technological unemployment. 3. Sickness and physical disability. 4. Divorce. 5. Chance risks of life. (Miller and Form: 601-603).

E) Six Goal Orientations: 1. ambitious. 2. responsive. 3. fulfilled. 4. confused. 5. frustrated. 6. defeated. (Miller and Form: 556).

F) Six Types of Work Progress: 1. rising. 2. repeating and paralleling. 3. completed. 4. erratic. 5. blocked. 6. regression (Miller and Form: 556).

79. How do other people label you as a person?

80. How does the general public label you and your occupation as a package?

P. Immediate Situational Determinants

81. Are there any practices of the screening, selection, or hiring agencies that might affect your chances for hiring or advancement in either a positive or negative direction? If so: What are they and how do they affect you?

82. Are there explicit standards of knowledge, skills, ethics, etc., that affect your immediate chances for advancement?

83. What is your realistic estimate of your job opportunities at present?

84. Do other people often label you or identify you by your occupation or occupational type? If so: With what effects on you?

85. What are the immediate plans of your employers or your superiors for you and others at your level in your organization?

Q. Definition of the Situation

86. What styles of bargaining do you and your co-workers use to resolve role conflicts and problems in your work situation?

87. What are your perceptions of the major facilities or means available, sanctions possible, societal or group norms which impinge upon your occupational performance?

88. What are your major motivations for pursuing your occupation? Rank them in order of priority?

89. What is the typical personal image projected by the trainees, novices, newcomers, apprentices or beginning workers in your field?

90. How would you characterize the typical styles of social accommodation to one another that are common between members or co-workers in your field?
Accommodation is the mode or manner of interaction.
91. How socially close or distant are people in your occupational specialty A) from one another, B) from others of higher or lower occupational status?
92. What are some of the means and goals of education that characterize the training of new people in your field?
93. What ways do members of your occupation have of sharing with one another that come to you as typical, unusual, unique or common?
A) How does this affect you?
B) How does it affect your way of dealing with other people?

R. Coordination Attempts
94. How do persons in your occupation attempt to mesh or coordinate their actions with one another?
95. Do they use promotive methods, going the extra mile to work well together?
A) Or do they use preventive methods, waiting until crises occur and then trying to patch them up?

The great length of this list makes for a more complete life history. The General Policy Systems approach used here to develop this list upholds the necessity of synthesizing a complete range of interacting variables.

A well equipped self improving college teacher, after a year or more of serious self-exploration might very well end up with some combination of the following devices in his/her arsenal of tools, in approximate chronological order of gathering of materials (numbered as in Diagram A):

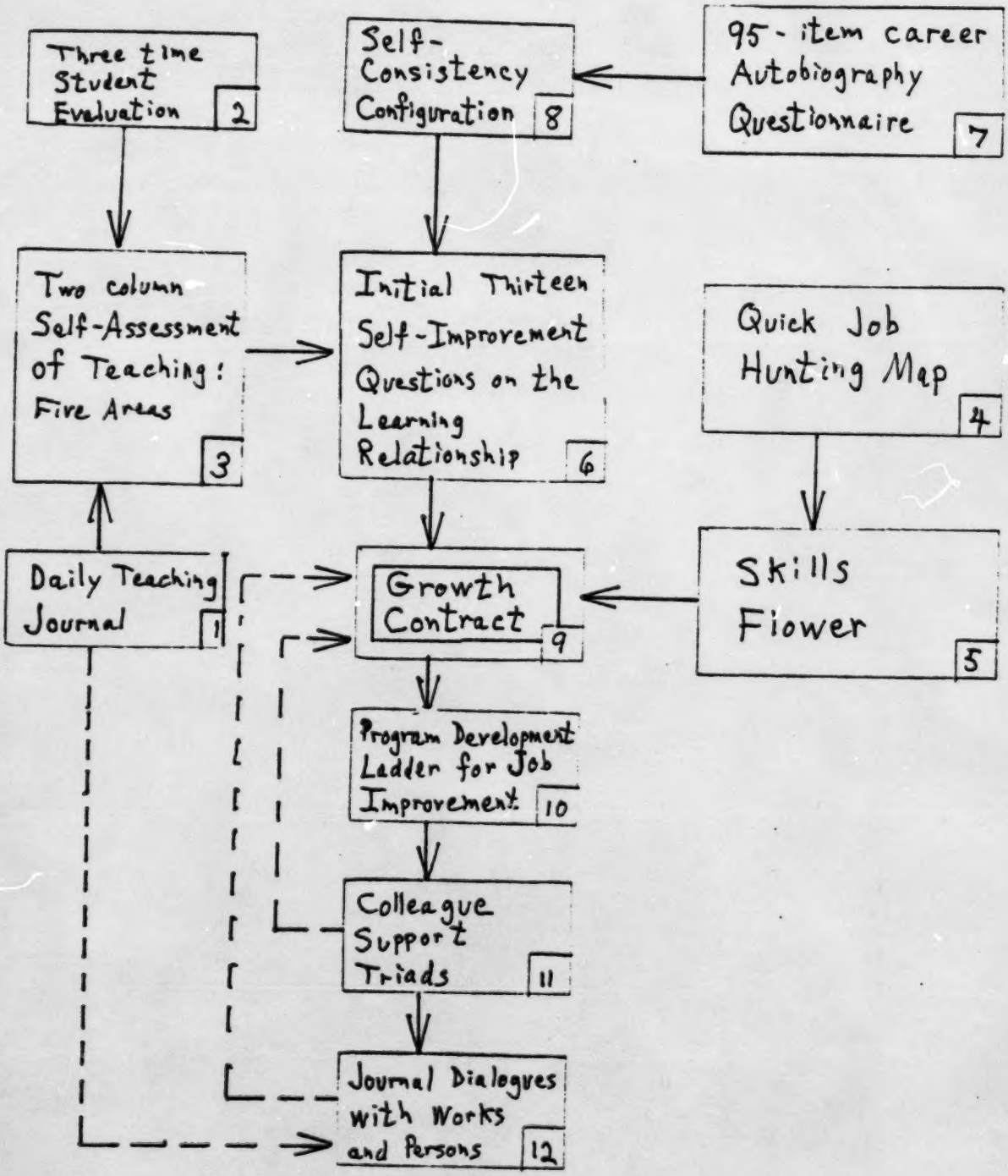
1. A daily teaching journal, consisting of reflections and afterthoughts and feelings about each class taught that day, the students' reactions, and diagnostic recommendations for future class meetings.
2. A three-part, learning relationship focused, set of questionnaires on the students' expectations and reactions to the teacher, the course and ratings of their own contribution to

the course experiences to that date. One part would be administered in the first three weeks, one at mid-term and one in the last week.

3. A two-column summary self-assessment of teaching. This would consist of a left column list of comments of students and feedback from questionnaires and offhand as well as casual comments from students, together with your own evaluations of your success in teaching on such key dimensions as: A) Organization/clarity, B) Dynamism/Enthusiasm, C) Analysis/Synthesis, D) Group interaction, and E) Individual interaction. The right column would consist of your own tentative alternate possible answers and solutions to the problems indicated in the left column. This should be typed up to show trusted colleagues or faculty development experts who have no political or economic power over you.
4. A completed "Quick Job Hunting Map" based on Bolles' appendix or separate booklet from What Color is Your Parachute. This background on one's own career experiences will not only help you to reinforce your motivation to be a teacher, but also help you in translating your identifiable skills in the work world to pedagogical procedures for helping your students to develop their own skills following the model of your own experience.
5. A skills flower, based on the job-hunting map, centering around your highest priority, global skills, and surrounded by petals of the flower listing your major career goals, the places where you might like to work geographically, and contentwise, the kind of people you would like to work with the most, specific, desired working conditions, the level or kinds of responsibilities

DIAGRAM A

SELF IMPROVEMENT SEQUENCE


Three time Student Evaluation 2
Self-Consistency Configuration 8
95-item career Autobiography Questionnaire 7
Two column Self-Assessment of Teaching: Five Areas 3
Initial Thirteen Self-Improvement Questions on the Learning Relationship 6
Quick Job Hunting Map 4
Daily Teaching Journal 1
Growth Contract 9
Skills Flower 5
Program Development Ladder for Job Improvement 10
Colleague Support Triads 11
Journal Dialogues with Works and Persons 12

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that you would prefer, and the area or location of the particular position(s) that you prefer.

6. Your responses to the initial thirteen or so self-improvement questions on the learning relationship stated at the beginning of this paper.
7. The answers to the 95-item career autobiography questionnaire stated in the body of this present paper.
8. A self-consistency configuration (a la Prescott Lecky, 1945) should be drawn up, using three concentric circles to indicate what is (1) at the core of the person's self concept, 2) in the middle in importance, and 3) at the periphery, but still of some significance in filling in the whole picture of the person's life and career. (See Slawski's chapter on the use of this theory of Self Consistency in his Social Psychological Theories handbook, 1981). This summative procedure will help to pinpoint major sources of conflict in your life with a view to possible solutions. A separate teaching oriented self consistency configuration could be used to obtain a better overall picture of the inconsistencies and possible resolution of them in your teaching life.
9. Develop a one or two-page statement as your faculty growth contract, for the next two years, or until your next promotion or tenure review. This consists of a statement in brief of your role obligations as a faculty member (e.g., percentage of time to be devoted to research, teaching, or service); a brief assessment of your strengths and weaknesses; a statement of your specific goals to be sought during the period of the contract; this would include an indication of the operational means

of evaluation of your attainment on each of your goals; a complete list of your plans to attain your goals for the period; a list of resources needed from your academic institution to implement your contract and plans for improvement; and a list of three or more colleagues and possibly students to help you to implement your plan. This would constitute your facilitative evaluation committee, which would have no decision making power over you, only consultative and persuasive, with a view to helping you to make the improvements that only you can determine for yourself, in the last analysis.

10. A program development ladder for job improvement, or to achieve the goals of your self-improvement contract, ought to be spelled out. This consists (developed by Cash et al., 1973, in the tradition of Carkhuff's work) of a very brief statement of your main goal for a specified period of time, the preferred courses of action, some alternate ways of achieving the goal, your selected most effective way (with the aid of a separate values-oriented problem solving worksheet). The central part of the ladder though is the behaviorally measurable breakdown of the five steps you will need to pass through to attain your goal, with operational definitions of attainment of each, and supplemented by a reward you will give yourself when you have attained each step. This is a powerful incentive building device, especially if it is broken down into steps that are definitely within reach in the time period allowed.

11. You should select a colleague support triad to help you review your program, and help evaluate your attainment, with constructive suggestions. Although mentioned above under faculty growth

contract, it is important enough to reemphasize here in a separate category.

12. You might also try dialogues with works in an intensive journal (as per Progoff, 1975). This consists of reflectively and intuitively talking to your job, writing a script automatically, as though the job could talk back to you. I tell my job this: ..... It tells me that: .... Or a dialogue with persons, in this case with students could be written in your journal. I tell my students, or a particular student: .... The student responds back: .... Continue the dialogues until it plays itself out in your imagination. Then reread it back to yourself, even record it on tape, play it back, and then enter your thoughts after you reread your dialogue in the journal. This can help gain perspective on the issues that occupy your mind, or the students that bother or please you, or the class or student body atmosphere as a whole as shown in the classes you teach.

Thus ends Slawski's brief statement of a possible comprehensive plan for self-improvement of yourself as a teacher. A kind of policy systems flow diagram was presented here (Diagram A) by way of summary of this self-help manual, with directional arrows indicating which items will more likely come prior to which other devices, in tentative chronological order of development of your plans. These devices may help you to keep your job, do a better job of teaching (whether or not it is officially rewarded), and finally to see your teaching and work career in general in better perspective in relation to alternate possible careers. This ought to be particularly useful in this threatening era for teachers in the humanities and social sciences.

The devices should also help us all to develop and assess our mission and goals as teachers say of a particular specialty area. They may even give us the confidence that accompanies a well worked out philosophy of life, a positive self concept, and a good direction on our separate paths toward career fulfillment as well as self and social actualization.

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